CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A method of integrating the installation, on one or more target machines, of software prerequisites with a to-be-installed (TBI) software application, comprising the steps of:

determining if said TBI software application requires any software prerequisites;

obtaining all required software prerequisites;

creating a super image comprising the TBI software application wrapped with said software prerequisites; and

distributing said super image to all machines on which said software application is to be installed.

2. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said step of creating a super image comprises at least the steps of:

defining an object model representing the integrated software installation; and

populating the object model with attributes and methods to describe the TBI software application and said required software prerequisites.

3. A method as set forth in claim 2, wherein said step of creating a super image further comprises at least the step of instantiating one or more objects according to the defined object model, and wherein the populating step populates the instantiated object(s).

4. A method as set forth in claim 3, wherein the instantiating step instantiates an object for the the TBI software application and one or more component objects for each of said prerequisites.

5. A method as set forth in claim 4, further comprising the step of using the populated object model to install the TBI software application.

6. A method as set forth in claim 5, wherein the step of using the populated object model further comprises at least the steps of:

identifying one or more target machines on which the TBI software application is to be installed;

downloading the super image to the identified target machines; and

performing an installation at each of the identified target machines using the downloaded super image.

7. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said super image is a temporary file that is deleted from said target machines upon completion of the installation process.

8. A method for improving installation of software packages on one or more target machines, comprising the steps of:

identifying, prior to installation, software prerequisites that need to be installed with a particular software package;

obtaining said identified software prerequisites;

creating a super image comprising said software package and said identified software prerequisites; and

distributing said super image to all target machines.

9. A method as set forth in claim 8, wherein said step of creating a super image comprises at least the steps of:

defining an object model representing the software installation being performed; and

populating the object model with attributes and methods to describe the particular software package and any required software prerequisites identified.

10. A method as set forth in claim 9, wherein said step of creating a super image further comprises at least the step of instantiating one or more objects according to the defined object model, and wherein the populating step populates the instantiated object(s).

11. A method as set forth in claim 10, wherein the instantiating step instantiates an object for the particular software package and one or more component objects for each of said identified software prerequisites.

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising the step of using the populated object model to install the particular software package.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the step of using the populated object model further comprises at least the steps of:

identifying one or more target machines on which the particular software package is to be installed;

downloading the super image to the identified target machines; and

performing an installation at each of the identified target machines using the downloaded super image.

14. A method as set forth in claim 8, wherein said super image is a temporary file that is deleted from said target machines upon completion of the installation process.

15. A system of integrating the installation, on one or more target machines, of software prerequisites with a to-be-installed (TBI) software application, comprising:

means for determining if said TBI software application requires any software prerequisites;

means for obtaining all required software prerequisites;

means for creating a super image comprising the TBI software application wrapped with said software prerequisites; and

means for distributing said super image to all machines on which said software application is to be installed.

16. A system as set forth in claim 15, wherein said means for creating a super image comprises at least:

means for defining an object model representing the integrated software installation; and

means for populating the object model with attributes and methods to describe the TBI software application and said required software prerequisites.

17. A system as set forth in claim 16, wherein said means for creating a super image further comprises at least means for instantiating one or more objects according to the defined object model, and wherein the populating step populates the instantiated object(s).

18. A system as set forth in claim 17, wherein said means for instantiating instantiates an object for the the TBI software application and one or more component objects for each of said prerequisites.

19. A system as set forth in claim 18, further comprising means for using the populated object model to install the TBI software application.

20. A system as set forth in claim 19, wherein said means for using the populated object model further comprises at least:

means for identifying one or more target machines on which the TBI software application is to be installed;

means for downloading the super image to the identified target machines; and

means for performing an installation at each of the identified target machines using the downloaded super image.

21. A system as set forth in claim 15, wherein said super image is a temporary file that is deleted from said target machines upon completion of the installation process.

22. A computer program product embodied on computer-readable medium for integrating the installation, on one or more target machines, of software prerequisites with a to-be-installed (TBI) software application, the computer program product comprising executable instructions for:

determining if said TBI software application requires any software prerequisites;

obtaining all required software prerequisites;

creating a super image comprising the TBI software application wrapped with said software prerequisites; and

distributing said super image to all machines on which said software application is to be installed.

23. A computer program product as set forth in claim 22, wherein said computer executable instructions for creating a super image include computer executable instructions for:

defining an object model representing the integrated software installation; and

populating the object model with attributes and methods to describe the TBI software application and said required software prerequisites.

24. A computer program product as set forth in claim 23, wherein said computer executable instructions for a super image further includes computer executable instructions for: instantiating one or more objects according to the defined object model, and wherein the computer executable instructions for populating the object model populates the instantiated object(s).

25. A computer program product as set forth in claim 24, wherein computer executable instructions for instantiating instantiates an object for the the TBI software application and one or more component objects for each of said prerequisites.

26. A computer program product as set forth in claim 25, further comprising computer executable instructions for using the populated object model to install the TBI software application.

27. A computer program product as set forth in claim 25, wherein computer executable instructions for using the populated object model further includes computer executable instructions for:

identifying one or more target machines on which the TBI software application is to be installed;

downloading the super image to the identified target machines; and

performing an installation at each of the identified target machines using the downloaded super image.

28. A computer program product as set forth in claim 22, wherein said super image is a temporary file that is deleted from said target machines upon completion of the installation process.